

## MONTANA DISTRICT OFFICE E-NEWS

FY11 4th Quarter

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### FOUR0SIX...NOT JUST MONTANA'S AREA CODE

Alex Rincon, Jr., known by his friends as "Papu", always knew he would start his own business someday. It wasn't until after graduating from Carroll College in 2004, and managing multiple retail businesses, that his business idea began to take shape.

While attending Carroll College, Rincon obtained a triple major, including a B.A. in Business Administration with a special interest in Marketing, Management and International Business; a B.A. in Spanish Language and Literature; and a Multi-Disciplinary major in Visual Arts with an interest in Graphic Design. In his spare time he enjoyed all that Montana had to offer including, snowboarding, hiking, fly fishing and much more. It was this love for Montana's outdoors and lifestyle, along with his diverse scholastic background, that brought fourOsix to light.

In 2007, Rincon opened fourOsix in downtown Helena, a lifestyle and retail store that promotes art, music, style, forward thinking and Montana living. The name "four 'O' six" represents all of Montana, as (406) is the only area code for the state.

In the beginning, Rincon assembled a team of professionals, including advisors from SBA's local SCORE Chapter to help get his business idea off the ground. With his stubborn "not going to give up attitude" and ample planning, Rincon fashioned a sound business plan and secured the needed funding to launch

his business venture.

"Some people see problems- I see solutions for those problems," says Rincon, referring to the challenges of

starting a business. "It took some people time to see and understand my vision for a retail store that is also a lifestyle store and a socially aware business."

Rincon's business model has always been to build a successful brand while simultaneously making a positive impact to its local community and economy.

Rincon jokes about not running his business as the ideal for-profit business, but rather tends to run it as a non-profit venture, by investing most of its profit back into the community in and contributes time and resources to local schools, and by organizing & funding art, music and recreation events around Montana.

While maintaining its stance on supporting the community, fourOsix has indeed made a name for itself. While stopped at a stoplight in Montana it wouldn't be uncommon to find the fourOsix logo on nearly every other vehicle. Due to the success of its own brand fourOsix recently began doing their own on-site screen printing which allows custom-



ers the opportunity to customize their favorite fourOsix branded clothing.

Rincon has had a great year, after being named SBA's Montana Young Entrepreneur of the Year, he was selected to participate in an exclusive event at the White House called Champions of Change. This program highlights stories and examples of citizens across the country that represent President Obama's vision of out-innovating, out-educating, and out-building the rest of the world through effective projects and initiatives that move their communities forward.

Rincon humbly admits being an inspiration to other people, including the usual younger generation that shops in his store. "I get to talk to my customers about what it's like to own my own business and talk to them about dreaming big and sometimes just going for it," Rincon said. "More than just the success of my business though, I love being able to really have passion for what I do."

## MONTANA DISTRICT OFFICE TO ADD NEW TEAM MEMBER— KARI OTTO

The Montana District Office is excited to make the announcement that Kari Otto will be joining the office as Deputy District Director. Otto will take over supervisory responsibilities of Robert Much, who will be retiring at the end of the calendar year. Otto will join the Montana District Office on November 7th.

Otto has 20 years of leadership experience and 10 years of upper level management experience. She comes to SBA after completing a successful career in the military. She has served in Natick, Massachusetts as the Garrison Commander for three years and two years as the Deputy District

Commander for the US Army Corps of Engineers Afghanistan Engineer District where she provided oversight of a \$2.1 billion construction program.

"I am thrilled to join the SBA team. Montana offers tremendous opportunities for small businesses. I look forward to interacting with the local communities as well as educating people on the resources and support SBA provides," stated Otto. "I'm also tremendously excited to fulfill a life time dream of working and living in Montana."

"Although we will be losing a great asset to our team by

Robert's retirement, I'm excited to welcome Kari Otto to our team," Joe McClure, District Director said. "Kari's military background not only brings a tremendous amount of leadership experience, but also brings a unique perspective through her involvement in government contracting. I look forward to introducing her to the great business community we have in Montana."

## Lenders Corner

### SBA APPROVES MONTANA NON-PROFIT TO START MAKING SMALL BUSINESS LOANS

Montana Community Development Corporation (Montana CDC) of Missoula is the first Montana lender approved to take part in a new pilot loan program which is designed to expand access to capital for small businesses and entrepreneurs in underserved communities. Montana CDC is one of only 22 Community Advantage lenders approved nationally.

Montana CDC will be able to begin accepting applications immediately. The Community Advantage Program offers a streamlined application process for SBA 7(a) loans up to \$250,000 through mission focused financial institutions, including Community Development Financial Institutions, Certified Development Companies and non-profit micro-lending intermediaries.

Community Advantage leverages the experience these institutions already have in lending in economically challenged

markets, along with their management and technical assistance expertise to help make their borrowers successful.

"Working with these community-based, mission-focused lenders will greatly enhance our ability to bring much needed financial resources to small businesses in underserved communities, which include minority, women and veteran-owned, as well as rural businesses," said Joe McClure Montana District Director for the SBA. "These businesses are among the hardest hit by the recent economic downturn and helping them recover, expand and create jobs will strengthen both their local economy and our nation as a whole."

SBA began accepting applications from lenders in February, and Montana CDC is currently the only Montana lender approved by SBA.

Expanding opportunities for entrepreneurs and small business owners in underserved communities is core to SBA's mission. As a result, all of SBA's programs are having an impact in underserved communities. In addition to the Community Advantage pilot program, in December SBA announced the new Small Loan Advantage, which is open to the agency's existing Preferred Lenders.

Both Community Advantage and Small Loan Advantage offer a streamlined application process for SBA-guaranteed 7(a) loans up to \$250,000. Advantage loans will come with the regular 7(a) government guarantee, 85 percent for loans up to \$150,000 and 75 percent for those greater than \$150,000.

**Contact Montana Community Development Corporation regarding this new loan program at  
406.728.9234**

*"Working with these community-based, mission-focused lenders will greatly enhance our ability to bring much needed financial resources to small businesses in underserved communities..."*

## MONTANA'S DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE RECEIVES SBA STEP (STATE TRADE & EXPORT PROMOTION) PROGRAM GRANT

The U.S. Small Business Administration is providing \$30 million in grants to states, territories, and the District of Columbia, including \$307,849 to the Montana Department of Commerce, to help increase exporting by small businesses during the next 12 months. The grants were authorized by the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, under the State Trade and Export Promotion Program (STEP).

The STEP program, launched in March, aligns with President Obama's National Export Initiative. The President's initiative calls for doubling U.S. exports in five years – and in so doing, supporting two million jobs. The program provides federal gov-

ernment funding for 65 to 75 percent of program costs, with states supplying the remainder.

"Strengthening the nation's economy through a substantial increase of U.S. exports is a top priority for the Administration and the agency," said SBA Administrator Karen Mills. "This is a unique partnership between the federal government and the states. Sharing responsibilities and resources will help new small exporters across the country enter and succeed in the global market."

The funding will support participation in foreign trade missions, foreign market sales trips, subscriptions to services

provided by the Department of Commerce, website translations fees, design of international marketing media, trade show exhibitions, participation in training workshops, and other critical export initiatives.

Small businesses that want to receive assistance under the STEP program should contact the Montana Department of Commerce.

The SBA anticipates it will conduct a new competition for STEP program grants during the winter of 2011. Awards will be made in September 2012 for export support services by states over the following 12 months.

## MONTANA'S WBC WELCOMES NEW SUB-CENTER RAVALLI COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Montana Women's Business Center (WBC) announced that Ravalli County Economic Development Authority, in Hamilton, will host the second WBC satellite office in the state. They join the lead WBC center at Prospera along with the first WBC sub-center located at Career Transitions, in Belgrade.

"We are excited to expand the Montana WBC services to other areas of the state, as we continue our efforts to provide busi-

ness assistance resources to Montana's women entrepreneurs," said Montana WBC Director, Amanda Schultz. "In our first two years of the Montana WBC program, we have seen incredible success of our business counseling and trainings, which has resulted in job creation, new business starts and access to capital. Our expansion to this area of the state will help us continue to grow the program and our impact on our local and state

economies," continued Schultz.

"The Ravalli County Economic Development Authority is honored to have been selected by Prospera to host a WBC sub-center," said their Executive Director, Julie Foster. "We look forward to providing the same high standard of service that Prospera and the Montana WBC delivers to their program and clients," continued Foster.

*"We are excited to expand the Montana WBC services to other areas of the state..."*

## Contracting Corner

### JOIN THE 8(A) PROGRAM

The Montana SBA District office is actively encouraging business firms in Montana to investigate and apply to the 8(a) federal contracting program if they meet the program criteria.

The 8(a) program is a nine-year business development program for small businesses where the owner(s) fits the SBA's criteria of being **socially and economically disadvantaged** and the same owners control the firm. The 8(a) program helps these

firms develop their business and provides them with access to government contracting opportunities, allowing them to become solid competitors in the federal marketplace. It also provides specialized business training, counseling, marketing assistance and high-level executive development to its participants. In FY09, small businesses in the United States received **\$18.6 billion in 8(a) contract dollars**.

Please check out the program details to see if you may qualify by going to the following address: <http://www.sba.gov/content/8a-business-development-0>

If you have further questions about the program please call the Montana SBA District Office at 406-441-1081.

**WE'D ALSO LIKE TO WELCOME  
NEW 8(A) FIRM  
S&K ENVIRONMENTAL  
OF ARLEE, MT**

## MONTANA SBA LOAN ACTIVITY FY2011 (10/01-09/30)

### RANKED BY NUMBER OF SBA LOAN APPROVALS

Lender Name	#	\$
VALLEY BANK OF HELENA	53	\$6,454,800
YELLOWSTONE BANK	42	\$11,949,200
FIRST INTERSTATE BANK	41	\$11,815,800
FLATHEAD BANK OF BIGFORK	33	\$7,107,100
WESTERN SECURITY BANK	28	\$2,424,100
GLACIER BANK	24	\$4,407,700
STOCKMAN BANK OF MONTANA	24	\$4,446,400
MOUNTAIN WEST BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	23	\$7,063,600
WELLS FARGO BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	17	\$5,187,900
BIG SKY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	16	\$12,576,000
MONTANA COMMUNITY FINANCE CORPORATION	16	\$9,583,000
FIRST SECURITY BANK OF MISSOULA	13	\$3,578,000
U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	12	\$574,100
FIRST SECURITY BANK	10	\$697,000
ROCKY MOUNTAIN BANK	9	\$3,415,400
BANK OF BRIDGER NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	7	\$1,193,700
THREE RIVERS BANK OF MONTANA	7	\$1,033,700
FIRST CITIZENS BANK OF BUTTE	6	\$5,335,200
FARMERS STATE BANK	5	\$1,639,300
FIRST SECURITY BANK OF HELENA	5	\$620,500
BANK OF ROCKIES NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	4	\$728,000
FLINT CREEK VALLEY BANK	4	\$3,002,900
AMERICAN FEDERAL SAVINGS BANK	3	\$295,100
EVOLVE BANK & TRUST	3	\$7,950,000
HIGH PLAINS FINANCIAL, INC.	3	\$3,151,000
LIVE OAK BANKING COMPANY	3	\$2,195,000
BANK OF BOZEMAN	2	\$770,000
BIG SKY WESTERN BANK	2	\$413,000
BITTERROOT VALLEY BANK	2	\$1,075,000
EAGLE BANK	2	\$425,000
MISSOULA FEDERAL CREDIT UNION	2	\$65,500
NEWTEK SMALL BUSINESS FINANCE INC.	2	\$523,000
RUBY VALLEY NATIONAL BANK	2	\$325,900
STEARNS BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	2	\$436,000
SUPERIOR FINANCIAL GROUP, LLC	2	\$12,500
TREASURE STATE BANK	2	\$241,500
VALLEY BANK OF GLASGOW	2	\$455,000
1ST BANK	1	\$168,000
BANK OF RED LODGE	1	\$405,000
BORREGO SPRINGS BANK, N.A.	1	\$25,000
CELTIC BANK CORPORATION	1	\$900,000
CLARE BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	1	\$950,000
COMMUNITY BANK, INC.	1	\$2,796,400
COMMUNITY BANK-MISSOULA, INC.	1	\$1,000,000
COMPASS BANK	1	\$1,509,300
FIRST BANK OF LINCOLN	1	\$450,000
FIRST CITIZENS BANK - POLSON NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	1	\$140,000
FIRST COMMUNITY BANK	1	\$850,000
FREEDOM BANK	1	\$1,619,200
LITTLE HORN STATE BANK	1	\$340,000
MANHATTAN BANK	1	\$136,000
PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN BANK	1	\$200,000
TETON BANKS	1	\$162,500
THE BANK OF BAKER	1	\$2,400,000
VALLEY BANK OF RONAN	1	\$180,000
WASHINGTON TRUST BANK	1	\$125,000
Grand Total	452	\$137,523,300